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The French Library of John and Joséphine Bowes

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As a response to the evolving nature of academia at large and a greater integration of outreach and impact to the humanities research landscape, the AHRC's Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) scheme, launched in 2014, facilitates substantial training for doctoral students beyond the academy through placements. As part of my three-year thesis project with the Northern Bridge DTP, I was granted six months of additional funding to undertake a project with the Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle, County Durham.² The Museum, which opened in 1892, was the result of the collecting of two individuals: John Bowes, son of the tenth Earl of Strathmore who served as MP for County Durham and later owned the Théâtre des Variétés in Paris; and Joséphine Coffin, dite Chevallier, an actress at the Variétés. United by their love of the arts, John and Joséphine married in 1852, and by 1874 had collected some fifteen thousand *objets d'art* that would eventually be housed in the Bowes Museum. These purchases form a renowned and varied collection that includes paintings by Goya and El Greco, porcelain from Sèvres and Meissen, furniture, textiles, and the famous Silver Swan automaton. What John and Joséphine also had an interest in collecting, however, was books. During their lifetime they amassed a collection of some 1500 volumes, primarily in French. These books, though briefly glossed in the two histories of the Museum, have gone largely untouched since the Museum opened.³ The main aim of my placement was to catalogue these volumes, surveying them for condition and rarity, and using them to learn what we can about the lives and literary tastes of the Museum's founders. In what follows, I will reflect upon my time at the Museum, highlighting those areas of the book collection of particular interest, and offering tentative conclusions as to what this collection might be able to tell us.

Literary Tastes and Motivations

The books contained in the Bowes library can be broadly split into categories: books on history; fiction and poetry; books on art, including numerous museum catalogues and guidebooks; travel books; religious texts; periodicals; and books on lifestyle, health and science. For Caroline Chapman, this book collection 'reveals an eclectic taste'.⁴ This is no doubt a result of the underlying motivation behind the purchase of the volumes. Charles Nodier, one of nineteenth-century France's greatest bibliophiles, provided a profile of book collectors in *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*. His description delineated two distinct approaches to books: that of the *bibliophile*, and that of the *bibliomane*. In Nodier's words,

² The Northern Bridge Doctoral Training Partnership, in its current manifestation, is a partnership between the Universities of Newcastle, Durham, and Queen's Belfast.

³ Charles E. Hardy makes only one mention of the book collection, stating in passing that volumes with fine and rare bindings were sent from Paris as part of the Museum project, *John Bowes and the Bowes Museum* (Newcastle: Frank Graham, 1970; repr. Barnard Castle: The Bowes Museum, 1989), p. 178, whilst Caroline Chapman gives a very brief overview of the collection, drawing attention primarily to texts by canonical French and English writers, *John and Joséphine: The Creation of the Bowes Museum* (Barnard Castle: The Bowes Museum, 2010), p. 47.

⁴ Chapman, *John and Joséphine*, p. 47.

‘le bibliophile sait choisir les livres; le bibliomane les entasse. [...] Le bibliophile apprécie le livre; le bibliomane le pèse ou le mesure. Le bibliophile procède avec une loupe, et le bibliomane avec une toise’.⁵ This taxonomic approach, however, fails to fully account for the Bowes collection. The eclecticism detected by Chapman no doubt stems from this library’s dual nature as the remnants of John and Joséphine’s personal library, but also as a museum collection. Most of the works of fiction and poetry, the travel books and the religious texts were likely all purchased to be read, whilst those pertaining to art and museums were doubtless used to inform John and Joséphine’s primary project of generating a museum collection. Those works in the library that bear fine and rare bindings were likely acquired expressly as part of this collection, as museum pieces themselves.

These various approaches to book culture are no doubt further complicated by the fact that John and Joséphine each seem to have had different tastes. John, probably sometime in the 1830s, produced a list of French authors he appreciated, one that contained largely canonical writers from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, including figures such as Racine, Montaigne, Diderot, Madame de Sévigné and Balzac.⁶ Unfortunately, if volumes by these writers (excluding Balzac) were once owned by John, they no longer appear in the Museum library; though a second list of books featuring complete editions of many of these writers as well as a number of biographies of Napoleon that forms part of the Museum archive suggests John did once own copies of them, and they were perhaps later either moved to one of the Bowes family residences at Gibside or Glamis, or sold after John’s death.⁷ Joséphine’s tastes, meanwhile, seem to have been much more Romantic. A manuscript catalogue dated 1869 is entitled ‘Catalogue des livres de Madame Bowes’, and includes predominantly nineteenth-century texts by writers like Victor Hugo, Champfleury, Lamartine, Alfred de Vigny, Eugène Sue and Alexandre Dumas.⁸ She also demonstrates a particular liking for women’s literature, with volumes by major writers like George Sand and Germaine de Staël, but also those writers now largely forgotten outside specialist circles, those Margaret Cohen has called the ‘Great Unread’.⁹ Joséphine owned multiple volumes from writers such as la Comtesse d’Ash, Maria Delcambre, Henriette Reybaud and Camille Henry. How reliable this catalogue is in matters of ownership is debatable; the five-volume edition of Lesage’s *Histoire de Gil Blas* appears in the catalogue attributing it to Joséphine, but is inscribed in John’s hand with the name ‘J. B. Bowes’,¹⁰ a moniker John adopted in 1825 and used until he completed his schooling at Trinity College, Cambridge,¹¹ suggesting the book belonged to John from his schooldays, rather than to Joséphine.

⁵ Charles Nodier, ‘L’Amateur de livres’, in *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*, 8 vols (Paris: Curmer, 1840–1842), III (1841), 201–9 (p. 202).

⁶ Document entitled ‘Note de bons auteurs’, Durham County Record Office, D/St/C1/16/550(i). With thanks to John Findlay for bringing this to my attention.

⁷ See the untitled list of books, The Bowes Museum Archive, JB/1/8/1/1/1.

⁸ See the document entitled ‘Catalogue des livres de Madame Bowes, Streatlam 1869’, The Bowes Museum Archive, JB/8/3/1/1.

⁹ Margaret Cohen, ‘Narratology in the Archive of Literature’, *Representations*, 108 (2009), 51–75 (p. 59).

¹⁰ Alain-René Lesage, *Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane*, 5 vols (Paris: Les libraires associés, 1759), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.843.79/Le.

¹¹ Hardy, *John Bowes*, pp. 25–26.

It is tempting to suggest that the collecting of books followed the wider patterns through which the Museum collection at large was amassed. Kate Hill has noted that the art purchased by John seems not to have attracted him on aesthetic or museological grounds, but rather because of the subject matter, and he shows a keen interest in historical painting. Hill suggests that Joséphine, meanwhile, focused on the traditional 'feminine' realms of collecting, purchasing ceramics and other decorative objects.¹² It would seemingly follow that the several hundred volumes of memoirs, biographies and historical texts were purchased at John's behest, whilst the bulk of the fiction was purchased for Joséphine. After all, the novel was considered a 'female' genre in the nineteenth century. But the bills in the archive reveal a more complex picture, since many of the bills for paintings are made out to Madame Bowes, rather than Monsieur.¹³ Unfortunately, the bills for books (where they exist) are decidedly vague: they are seldom itemised, detailing only the purchase of 'livres'. Nevertheless, the intention of the Bowes to include volumes as part of the Museum project is affirmed by the fact that those books that are in the Museum library underwent a painstaking transportation process, similar to that of the objects currently considered part of the core Museum collection. A number of lists were created at the point of postage, which were then cross-checked with second lists upon arrival at Barnard Castle, with each volume assigned a number that appears on a small piece of paper found inside many of the books during the cataloguing process.¹⁴

The Collection

The contents of the collection bespeak a desire to represent as full a spread of French history as possible. Amongst the hundreds of volumes that have a historical focus, there are dedicated texts to every French ruler from Charles VIII (King from 1483) to Napoleon III. Unsurprisingly, there is a particular concentration of works dealing with Louis XIV and Napoleon I, but these are unpartisan, suggesting a desire to give full representation to all political leanings. Of the volumes relating to the Napoleonic era, Bonapartist and Royalist texts appear in equal measure, and Tom Stammers has stated that it is difficult to extract a political conviction on the part of the Bowes from the objects they collected.¹⁵ These books are supplemented by a number of pamphlets, most of which pertain to the Revolution and Napoleonic period, as well as a selection of pamphlets that have been bound into volumes,

¹² Kate Hill, *Women and Museums, 1850-1914: Modernity and the Gendering of Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), p. 141.

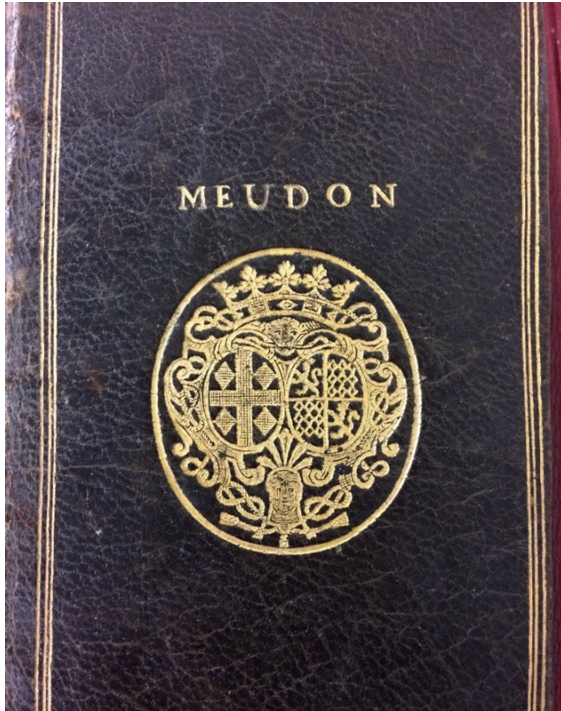
¹³ For instance, there are bills made out to Joséphine for paintings by Jeanne-Philiberte Ledoux (The Bowes Museum Archive, JB/5/10/3/63 and JB/5/11/2/118), one for a painting by Charles Chaplin (The Bowes Museum Archive, JB/5/11/3/42), and another for paintings by Louise Mauduit and Pierre-Louis de Laval (The Bowes Museum Archive, JB/5/5/6).

¹⁴ See the documents in the Bowes Museum Archive entitled 'List of books sent in case 12' (JB/1/8/1/1/4(ii)), 'List of books sent in case 16' (JB/1/8/1/1/5), and 'List of books sent in cases 6 & 7' (JB/1/8/1/1/6) for those volumes sent to the Museum from the Bowes residence at Streatlam, and 'List of books received from Paris in June 1885', 'List of books received from Paris in July 1885' (both JB/6/5/2/1/9), and 'List of books sent to the Museum from 7 rue de Berlin' (Folder JB/6/6/6) for those sent from the residence in Paris.

¹⁵ Tom Stammers, 'John Bowes and the Collectors of Napoleon in Nineteenth-Century Britain', in *The Allure of Napoleon: Essays Inspired by the Collections of the Bowes Museum* (Barnard Castle: The Bowes Museum, 2017), pp. 33-40 (pp. 37-38).

including a selection of *Mazarinades* and a series of pamphlets pertaining to the Diamond Necklace Affair.

This interest in history and a desire to constitute a Museum collection converge in the volumes that bear armorials. The content of these volumes appears to have been of secondary concern to the fact that they once had illustrious owners. One volume bears the arms of Madame de Pompadour, official chief mistress of Louis XV from 1745 to 1751.¹⁶ The



Cover of François de Calvi's *Histoire générale des Larrons*, bearing the arms of the Comtesse de Verrue with Meudon tooled in gold.

volume appears in the 'Histoire de France' section of the catalogue of Madame de Pompadour's library produced in 1765.¹⁷ Additionally, six editions of almanacs, including the *Almanach Royal*, are bound in royal armorials.¹⁸ There are two books in the arms of the Duc de Valentinois, both of which bear the handwritten inscription: 'Ce livre appartient à Mr le duc de Valentinois 1718'.¹⁹ In 1715, the title of Duc de Valentinois was recreated for Jacques-François-Léonor de Goyon de Matignon, and the arms on the bindings of these two volumes are of the Goyon de Matignon line. The title of Duc de Valentinois was granted to him when he married Louise-Hippolyte Grimaldi, and when her father, Antoine I de Monaco, died in 1731, she and her husband became Prince and Princess of Monaco. Finally, the Bowes owned two books from the library of Jeanne d'Albert de Luynes, comtesse de Verrue, goddaughter of Jean-Baptiste Colbert, one of Louis XIV's chief ministers. The comtesse de

¹⁶ Pierre de Lesconvel, *Anecdotes secrètes des règnes de Charles VIII et de Louis XII* (The Hague: J. Neaulme, 1741), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.923.2/An.

¹⁷ *Catalogue des livres de la bibliothèque de feu Madame la Marquise de Pompadour* (Paris: Jean-Thomas Hérissant; Jean-Thomas Hérissant, fils, 1765), p. 296.

¹⁸ *Almanach Royal de l'année 1765* (Paris: Le Breton, [1765]), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.305/Et; *Almanach de Versailles, année 1782. Contenant la Description de la Ville, du Château, du Parc; la Maison du Roi, celles de la Reine & de la Famille Royale; les Bureaux des Ministres; la Prévôte de l'Hotel, le Gouvernement de la Ville, &c.* The Bowes Museum French Library, F.305/Al; *Almanach de 1753* (Versailles: Blaizot, [1782]), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.305/Al; *Calendrier de la cour pour l'année bisextile 1824, contenant le Lieu du Soleil, son Lever, son Coucher, sa Déclinaison; le Lever et le Coucher de la Lune, etc. Avec la Naissance des Rois, Reines, Princes et Princesses de l'Europe; imprimé pour la famille royale et la maison de sa majesté* (Paris: Le Breton, [1753]), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.305/Ca; and two copies of *Calendrier de la cour pour l'année 1827, imprimé pour la famille royale et la maison de sa majesté* (Paris: Le Doux-Hérissant, [1827]), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.305/Ca.

¹⁹ Guy Joly, *Mémoires de M. Joly, conseiller du roy au chatelet de Paris, pour servir d'éclaircissement et de suite aux Mémoires de M. le C. de Retz* (Rotterdam: Chez les Héritiers de Leers, 1718), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.920/Jo, and Jean-François-Paul de Gondi de Retz, *Mémoires du cardinal de Retz*, 3 vols (Amsterdam: [n. pub.], 1718), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.920/Re.

Verrue was a major collector of *objets d'art*, including the Van Dyck portrait of Charles I, and she was also a bibliophile. It is estimated that her library contained some eighteen thousand volumes, distributed largely between two sites: her Paris home in Rue du Cherche-Midi, and her country house at Meudon. Those belonging to the latter library are tooled in gold with the word 'Meudon' on the front and back cover.²⁰ The two volumes in the Bowes collection belong to this library, with the Meudon title no doubt proving attractive to the Bowes.²¹

In a similar vein to those books collected for their armorials, there are volumes with bookplates that connect the work to significant figures. These include a volume containing the bookplate of Nathaniel Basevi, who was a conveyancer in London. He is of particular note



Bookplate of Paul de Saint-Victor.

as the first Jewish barrister to practise in the English courts, in addition to being a first cousin of Benjamin Disraeli.²² Similarly, two volumes contain bookplates of Thomas Philip de Grey, who was a Tory politician and statesman, but was also the first president of the Institute of British Architects, a fellow of the Royal Society, and a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.²³ Heavily influenced by French architecture, he was responsible for the construction of Wrest House in Bedfordshire during the 1830s. Four volumes appear in the collection from the library of author, literary critic, and collector

Paul de Saint-Victor, whose library was extensive.²⁴

²⁰ Lionel Chénédé, 'Jeanne-Baptiste d'Albert de Luynes, comtesse de Verruë (1670-1736)' (2015) <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/le_coin_du_bibliophile_comtesse_de_verrue_cle48c2fa.pdf> [accessed 28 March 2017].

²¹ These volumes are François de Calvi, *Histoire générale des Larrons* (Paris : A. Coulon, 1639), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.923.41/Ly, and Samuel de Broë, *Histoire du premier et du second triumvirat, depuis la mort de Catilina jusqu'à celle de Brutus*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Jean de la Caille, 1681), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.937/Br.

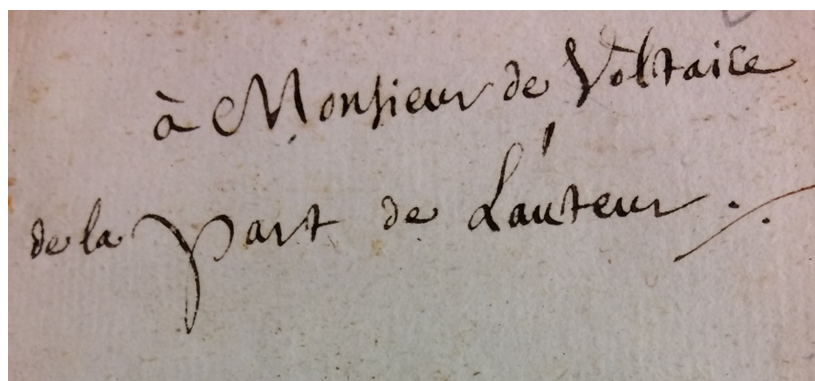
²² The volume is François Hüe, *Dernières années du règne et de la vie de Louis XVI*, 2nd ed. (Paris: L'Imprimerie royale, 1816), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.944.035/Hu.

²³ Pierre Bergeron, *Voyages faits principalement en Asie dans les XII, XIII, XIV, et XV siècles*, 2 vols (The Hague: Jean Neaulme, 1735), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.914/Be, and *Noticia historica de los principios, progreso, y ereccion de la Real Academia de Las Nobles Artes, pintura, escultura, y arquitectura, establecida en Valencia con el titulo de San Carlos, y relacion de los premios que distribuyo en la junta publica, celebrada en 18 de Agosto de 1773* (Valencia: Benito Monfort, 1773), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.708.467/No.

²⁴ Charles Yriarte, *Goya: sa biographie, les fresques, les toiles, les tapisseries, les eaux-fortes et le catalogue de l'œuvre* (Paris: Plon, 1867), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.759.6/Go; Torquato Tasso, *La Gerusalemme Liberata* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1843), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.851.46/Ta; Albrecht Dürer, *Albert Durer à Venise et dans les Pays-Bas: autobiographie, lettres, journal de voyages, papiers divers*, trans. by Charles Narrey (Paris: Vve J. Renouard, 1866), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.920/Du; and Jean-Georges Kastner, *Les Danses des morts, dissertations et recherches historiques, philosophiques, littéraires et musicales sur les divers monuments de ce genre qui existent ou qui ont existé tant en France qu'à l'étranger, accompagnées de la danse macabre, grande ronde vocale et instrumentale* (Paris: Brandus, 1852), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.246/Ka.

The Bowes also have a copy of the catalogue from the sale of Saint-Victor's *objets d'art*, which includes a section devoted to his library.²⁵ Some entries in this library section have been marked in pencil, possibly suggesting an interest on the part of the Bowes in purchasing these items.

Often the volumes purchased by the Bowes contain manuscript inscriptions. These frequently seem to suggest a similar practice as the armorials, a desire to own these books as part of their Museum project. For instance, the first three volumes of their copy of the bestselling memoirs of Vidocq bear Vidocq's signature.²⁶ Their copy of *La Révolution d'Angleterre*, by Philarète Chasles, bears an inscription from Chasles to Marguerite-Charlotte-Désirée de Lafitte de Pelleport, widow of novelist Bernardin de Saint-Pierre who later married author Aimé Martin, a close friend of Saint-Pierre.²⁷ Their copy of Charles Narrey's translation of *Albert Durer à Venise* acquired from the sale of Paul de Saint-Victor's library bears an inscription that reads: 'à Monsieur de Saint-Victor, hommage de l'auteur Charles Narrey'. A curious volume purchased by the Bowes is William Rogers's book on buccomancy.²⁸ Rogers presented himself as a dentist but was something of a swindler, and in 1850 produced a book



Inscription to Voltaire in Alexandre Toussaint de Gaigne's *Manuel, ou journée militaire*.

exploring this branch of physiognomy, claiming to be able to determine a person's past and future from their teeth, mouth and jaw. The Bowes copy of his book bears his signature on the cover, and alongside other volumes on divination and astrology, including the

complete works of mystic Marie-Anne Lenormand, their collection reflects a wider nineteenth-century interest in the occult.²⁹ Finally, a volume by Alexandre

²⁵ Eugène Féral, Charles Mannheim and P. L. Jacob, *Catalogue des tableaux anciens et modernes objets d'art et de curiosité, porcelaines, bronzes de l'Orient, meubles anciens, objets variétés, albums chinois et japonais, composant la collection de M. Paul de Saint-Victor dont la vente, par suite de décès, aura lieu Hôtel Drouot, salle no 8 les lundi 23 et mardi 24 janvier 1882 à deux heures* (Paris: impr. Pillot et Dumoulin, [1882]), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.708.4/Sa.

²⁶ François Vidocq, *Mémoires de Vidocq, chef de la police de sûreté jusqu'en 1827 aujourd'hui propriétaire et fabricant de papiers à Saint-Mandé*, 4 vols (Paris: Tenon, 1828-29), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.920/Vi.

²⁷ Philarète Chasles, *La Révolution d'Angleterre. Charles Ier, sa cour, son peuple et son parlement 1630 à 1660, histoire anecdotique et pittoresque du mouvement social et de la guerre civile en Angleterre au dix-septième siècle* (Paris: Vve L. Janet, [1844]), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.942.063/Ch.

²⁸ William Rogers, *La Buccomancie, ou l'art de connaître le passé, le présent et l'avenir d'une personne d'après l'inspection de sa bouche. Nouveau système buccognomonique, basé sur la doctrine des plus célèbres Physiognomistes, et principalement sur la découverte d'un alphabet buccal, c'est-à-dire sur les signes caractéristiques et révélateurs de la Bouche humaine* (Paris: G. Baillière, 1851), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.138/Ro.

²⁹ For more on the potential interest the Bowes had in the occult, see James Illingworth, 'The Allure of the Occult: The Bonapartes and the Sibyl of Saint-Germain', in *The Allure of Napoleon*, ed. by Tom Stammers, pp. 29-32.

Toussaint de Gaigne contains an inscription written by the author that offers the book to Voltaire, implying that the book was once owned by the French *philosophe*.³⁰ The Bowes certainly believed this inscription to be authentic: in one of their manuscript catalogues, this volume is the only book to be annotated beyond the basic bibliographic information, beside which is written 'livre ayant appartenu à Voltaire'.³¹

Whilst many of the volumes that bear inscriptions hint at previous illustrious owners, some are difficult to trace, referring to people about whom little information is available, and some are even cryptic. But perhaps most significant within the context of this collection are those volumes that bear handwritten inscriptions from the author to John and Joséphine. Although it has long been acknowledged that the Bowes moved within artistic circles, the identity of those who constituted their social milieu has remained something of a mystery. The bills and receipts in the Museum's archive reveal that the Bowes held parties that could accommodate 150 guests, but in his history of the Museum, Hardy states that 'it is impossible to say what people made up these large parties, apart from Josephine's family, some half-dozen English residents in Paris, and a number of French friends whose letters of appreciation are in the Museum archives'.³² Hardy does note a painting by Théodore Gudin inscribed 'offert à Madame Bowes', as well as a waltz by Gilbert which is similarly inscribed, but he makes no mention of the books.³³ These volumes do, however, offer a greater glimpse into their social lives, as well as their position in nineteenth-century Parisian society.

For instance, John Bowes clearly had a friendship with Amédée de Gréhan, who served as Consul of Siam in Paris. The Bowes Museum Archive contains two letters to John from Gréhan, one of which discusses a visit to Bowes.³⁴ The library includes a volume compiled by Gréhan on the occasion of the *Exposition universelle de 1867*, which presents the contributions of Siam.³⁵ A copy of Arsène Houssaye's *Cent et un sonnets* is inscribed to John Bowes as a 'simple carte de visite de belle digestion'. Houssaye was administrator of the Comédie-Française between 1849 and 1856, which overlapped with Bowes' time at the Variétés, and went on to become *Inspecteur général des Beaux-Arts*. Houssaye and Bowes would no doubt have a number of shared interests. The most enduring friendship that can be traced from these volumes is between John Bowes and Lorédan Larchey, curator of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal. John owned a number of works written by Larchey, including his famous dictionary of French slang,³⁶ and his editions of the *Journal de marche du sergent Fricasse* and of the

³⁰ Alexandre Toussaint de Gaigne, *Manuel, ou journée militaire* (Paris: Hardouin, 1776), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.355/Ga.

³¹ See the archive document entitled 'Catalogue', The Bowes Museum Archive, JB/1/8/1/1.

³² Hardy, *John Bowes*, p. 146.

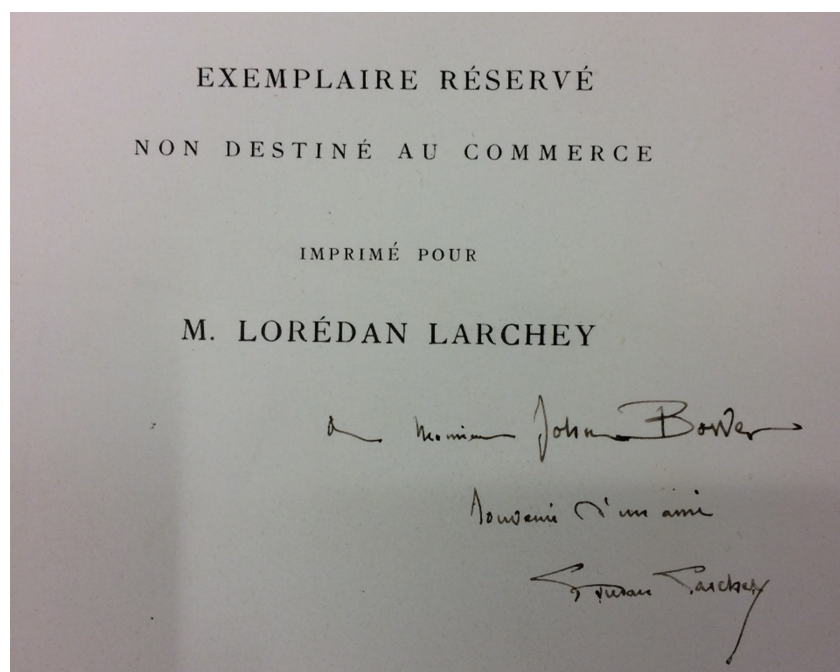
³³ The Gudin painting is *On the sands near Ostend*, 1863, oil on panel, 31 × 48 cm, The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, County Durham, whilst the waltz by Gilbert is entitled 'Reveries du Tyrol', The Bowes Museum Archive, JB/1/8/2/1.

³⁴ Letters from Amédée de Gréhan to John Bowes, one dated 1861 (The Bowes Museum Archive, JB/2/10/2/13) and another dated 1863 (The Bowes Museum Archive, JB/2/10/4/5).

³⁵ Amédée de Gréhan, *Le Royaume de Siam*, 2nd ed. (Paris: S. Raçon, 1868), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.915.93/Gr.

³⁶ Lorédan Larchey, *Dictionnaire historique, étymologique et anecdotique de l'argot parisien: sixième édition des excentricités du langage, mise à la hauteur des révolutions du jour*, 6th ed. (Paris: F. Polo, 1872), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.447/La.

history of the chevalier de Bayard.³⁷ The Bowes copy of *Histoire du gentil seigneur de Bayard* bears a handwritten inscription from Larchey to Bowes, stating ‘compliments affectueux’, and



Printed on the verso of the half title of the Bowes copy of Chroniques de Froissart, a copy printed specifically for Lorédan Larchey and subsequently gifted to John Bowes.

the Bowes also owned a copy of the Froissart's *Chroniques* printed as a presentation copy for Larchey, and subsequently gifted to John according to the handwritten inscription as a ‘souvenir d'un ami’.³⁸ In a final testament to the friendship between Larchey and John, a portrait of Larchey also appears in the Museum's collection. Larchey clearly showed an interest in the

Bowes Museum project, and offered John a choice of paintings from his own private collection. The work John chose to include was a portrait of Larchey himself, as a means of commemorating his generosity.³⁹

Of John's acquaintances, however, many of those who appear amongst the book collection were already known to some extent through the archives. It is those who dedicated their works to Joséphine alone that are especially revelatory. These include figures such as Louis Garneray, came from a family of painters: his two brothers were both artists, and his father was taught by David. Garneray himself had a varied and troubled career. He served as a sailor for 8 years, but was captured in 1806 by the British and imprisoned for nine years in Portsmouth. He then turned to painting, exhibiting in the Salon numerous times after 1815 and was appointed painter to the Duke of Angoulême. In 1833, he became director of the

³⁷ Jacques Fricasse, *Journal de marche du sergent Fricasse*, ed. by Lorédan Larchey (Paris: Aux frais de l'éditeur, 1882), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.920/Fr, and Jacques de Mailles, *Histoire du gentil seigneur de Bayard*, ed. by Lorédan Larchey (Paris: Hachette, 1882), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.920/Ba.

³⁸ Jean Froissart, *Chroniques de Froissart: édition abrégée avec texte rapproché au français moderne*, ed. by Henriette Elizabeth de Witt (Paris: Hachette, 1881), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.944/Fr.

³⁹ Faustin Besson, *Portrait de Lorédan Larchey*, oil on canvas, 55 × 46 cm, The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, County Durham.

museum of Rouen, and joined the Sèvres porcelain factory in 1841.⁴⁰ During his time at Sèvres he published his largely apocryphal memoirs, signed copies of which appear in the Bowes collection, bearing dedications from Garneray to Joséphine.⁴¹ The poet Maria Delcambre also appears to have had an enduring friendship with Joséphine. Three of her works appear in the collection, and all of them bear a dedication to ‘Madame et Monsieur Bowes’, except one, *Les Deuils de famille*, which is dedicated to Joséphine alone. The first two works simply pay homage to John and Joséphine, whereas this later work offers ‘souvenir affectueux’, implying perhaps that a closer bond of friendship has developed between her and Joséphine.⁴²

Conclusion

In 1921, the Museum’s Board of Trustees considered selling the French books held in the Museum’s library because they were deemed ‘unsuitable, or are not required by the public’.⁴³ Thankfully, they reconsidered. As I hope to have demonstrated within the confines of this paper, this book collection has numerous levels of significance. It is important for bringing copies of early editions of French texts to light, many of which are still in excellent condition, with a number of volumes still unopened, their pages uncut. As a collection that is at once a personal library but also a museum collection, it has the potential to reveal much about nineteenth-century reading practices in France, as well as the circulation of cultures across national borders. Above all, it reveals yet more about the lives of the founders of the Bowes Museum, John and Joséphine. These two figures were both pioneers in their own way, but they have long been neglected by museum historiography, considered as eccentric anomalies. Joséphine in particular has suffered from this perception. The French library at the Museum goes some way to re-situating them within their context, especially as it pertains to their social circles, demonstrating that they are much less marginal than has hitherto seemed the case. In what is the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the Museum, this project has proven extremely timely, shedding new light on these remarkable individuals, and opening new avenues of research.

⁴⁰ See *Dictionnaire des artistes de langue française en Amérique du Nord*, ed. by David Karel (Québec: Les presses de l’Université de Laval, 1992), pp. 329-30.

⁴¹ Louis Garneray, *Voyages de Louis Garneray, peintre de marines: Aventures et Combats* (Paris: G. Barba, [n. d.]), and Louis Garneray, *Captivité de Louis Garneray. Neuf années en Angleterre. Mes Pontons* (Paris: G. Barba, [n. d.]), both bound with other items from periodicals in a volume entitled *Romans divers*, The Bowes Museum French Library, F.843.89/Ro.

⁴² Maria Delcambre, *Les Craintives* (Paris: [n. pub.], 1854), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.841.89/De; Maria Delcambre, *Brin d’herbe* ([n. p.]: A. Delcambre, [n. d.]), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.841.89/De; and Maria Delcambre, *Les Deuils de famille, consolations* (Paris: J.-B. Pélagaud, 1857), The Bowes Museum French Library, F.242/De.

⁴³ ‘Trustees Minute Book, 1907-1924’, The Bowes Museum Archive, TBM/1/1/1/2.